



Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

Agricorp employees and Board members

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Connecting producers with programs
Établir un lien entre producteurs et programmes

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Code of Ethics

Since its establishment as a Crown corporation in 1996, Agricorp has demonstrated excellence in delivering programs, flexibility in developing new products, and a continuing focus on customer service.

As an agency of government, Agricorp conducts its activities in a business-like manner according to accepted management principles, including ethical behaviour, accountability, prudent use of public funds, and high-quality service.

Given our vision to be a versatile, customer-focused organization that works with partners to innovatively deliver programs and services that enhance the vitality of Ontario agriculture, it is important that Board members and employees maintain the highest level of integrity and responsible conduct.

This Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct ("the Code") sets out the standards of behaviour that Agricorp expects from its Board members and employees. The Code provides a set of guidelines and ethical standards to be used by Board members and employees in the day-to-day performance of their duties.

Board members and employees should be aware that a breach of the Code shall have consequences. For Board members a breach may lead to disclosure to the Minister and other actions, up to and including termination of appointment. For employees a breach shall lead to discipline, up to and including termination of employment for cause.

Scope

This Code applies to all Agricorp Board members and officers, consultants, and permanent, contract, and part-time employees.

This Code integrates various legislation and policies into a single document so that all Board members and employees will be able to easily familiarize themselves with the standards of behaviour that are expected of them.

As a condition of membership/employment Board members and employees, whether permanent or part-time, are expected to read and sign an acknowledgement form indicating that they agree to conduct themselves according to this Code.

Standards of Professional Conduct

The following is a list of expectations of Agricorp Board members and employees.

Accountability

- Project a positive, professional image.
- Conduct activities with honesty, fairness, and fiscal responsibility.
- Complete all work assignments in a prompt and efficient manner.
- Treat all people with equality and respect, regardless of gender, age, race, or religion.
- Report any violation of the law, policies, or procedures through your manager to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), if you are an employee, or to the Chair of the Board of Directors if you are a Board member.

Service to the Public

- Bring to your work integrity, dedication, and a passion for excellence.
- Provide timely, knowledgeable, and courteous assistance to our customers.
- Be sensitive and responsive to changing needs, wishes, and rights of the public while respecting the legal framework within which service is provided.
- Promote excellence in public service by enhancing your professional knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Political Activity

- Agricorp follows the Public Service of Ontario Act (PSOA) rules regarding political activity rights for public servants. For further details, please refer to the Summary of Political Activity Rights and Restrictions for Public Servants: Federal and Provincial Elections. (NOTE: Agricorp Board Members and Staff are included in the "Most public servants" column)
- Whenever you are uncertain as to the legality or propriety of expressing your personal views, seek approval through your manager from the CEO, or from the Chair of the Board of Directors if you are a Board member.

Conflict of Interest

- Agricorp utilizes the PSOA Regulation 381/07 as its conflict of interest rules.
- All program payments and claims to Board members and employees may be subject to audit.

Use of Agricorp Property and Electronic Tools

Agricorp has a substantial investment in physical, electronic, and employee resources to assist employees in carrying out their duties more effectively. Employees should apply good judgment to the use of electronic research and communication tools and use these tools responsibly.

- The use of such resources must not threaten or harm the reputation of the organization in any way.
- These tools are for business use – for activities related to job functions. Any personal use should be minimal and only outside regular working hours.
- Employees should keep passwords private and should not share them with others.
- Employees must not use the tools at any time:
 - in violation of any laws
 - to transmit confidential information to parties who should not receive it
 - to download, disseminate, or post any copyrighted material
 - for political or lobbying purposes
 - to view or transmit obscene, racist, or objectionable material
 - for commercial or profit-making purposes unrelated to Agricorp
 - to prevent others from accessing services or to attempt to disrupt services
 - to send forged messages under someone else's user-I.D., or
 - to access, attempt to access, or use another individual's data or information without proper authorization.
- Agricorp purchases or licenses computer software for business use. Board members or employees should not copy, reproduce, acquire, or use unauthorized copies of computer software.

It is the employee's responsibility to be in compliance with this Code. If in doubt about an issue, discuss it with your manager. It is the manager's responsibility to enforce this policy. Managers should use reasoned judgment to determine whether or not a circumstance requires strict adherence to the policy. Some circumstances may be more appropriately dealt with in a manner to ensure compliance with the spirit and intent of the policy.

Confidentiality

Agricorp Board members and its employees are subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER F.31. All are required to comply with Agricorp's Privacy Policy.

- Do not divulge any confidential information to any person unless expressly authorized or required by law to do so. This obligation continues indefinitely, even when you are no longer a member of the Board or employed by Agricorp. Our clients trust that Board members and employees will protect the confidentiality and sensitivity of personal information entrusted to their custody.

- Exercise due diligence in the protection of confidential information. This includes, but is not limited to, such physical measures as the locking of file cabinets, the securing of personal computer databases, password protecting mobile devices, shredding appropriate documents, and using secure email service.
- Do not disclose to any member of the public, either orally or in writing, any secret or confidential information acquired by virtue of your official position.

Discrimination and Harassment

- Employees have a duty to treat members of the public and one another fairly and to ensure that their work environment is free from discrimination and harassment.
- All harassing conduct, including behaviour that a reasonable person would conclude contributes to an intimidating or offensive environment, is forbidden. The Ontario *Human Rights Code* clearly prohibits discrimination, which includes harassment against any employee on the basis of:
 - race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, same-sex partnership status, or disability; and
 - sexual harassment or harassment on the basis of gender or sexual orientation.

Relevant Legislation

Legislation	Location
AgriCorp Act	http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_96a17a_e.htm
The Ontario Human Rights Code	http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h19_e.htm
Public Service of Ontario Act (PSOA)	http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_06p35_e.htm
PSOA Regulation 381/07	http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_070381_e.htm
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act	http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90f31_e.htm

Other information	Location
Agricorp Privacy Policy	http://www.agricorp.com/en-ca/privacy
Political Activity Rights for Ontario Public Servants	http://www.fanshawec.ca/assets/newsroom/election_guidelines.pdf